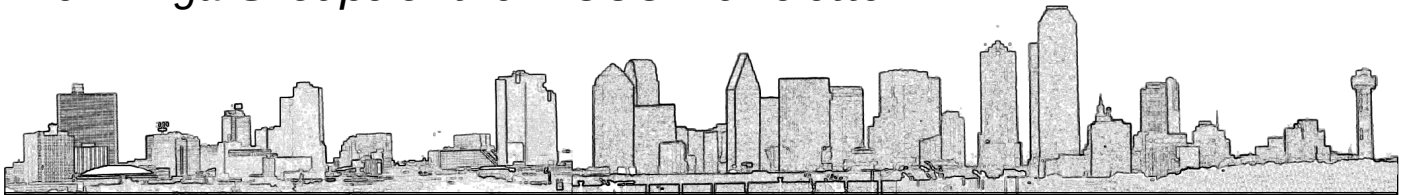


The AGM Journal

The Amiga Groups of the MCCC Newsletter



Fort Worth

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Dallas

Cyber 3000

The Cyberstorm, Cybervision64 and CyberGraphX Combination

by Johnny C. Kitchens

When the Amiga was introduced in 1985, it represented a new price performance level to the world of computing, more so the performance level. Part of my enjoyment has been exploring to upper limits of performance for the Amiga. While my first Amiga, the 1000, was limited in its scope of enhancements, very few add-ons actually showed up for it. My first accelerator was in the form of a 68000 running at twice the normal clock speed. It worked well, but it was not a big jump in performance. Only tests taking advantage of the math chip showed any serious improvements in speed. In real world everyday usage it showed little change in operation. It wasn't until I saw a GVP 68030 accelerator in operation that I knew what real acceleration looked like. Everything was recognizably faster in every way. I now knew what I wanted in my Amiga, SPEED!

I later purchased a 2500 with the A2620 card featuring the 14MHz 68020. Although I never got to use the A2620, as I replaced it with a GVP 28MHz 68030, I did get to see it used. It was definitely faster than any 68000. Through time I advanced the 2500 up to the 68040, along with better hard drive controllers and hard drives, and the Picasso II for graphics acceleration as well. I was really pleased with the machine. It did everything very quickly! During all of this time, one Amiga really caught my eye and thoughts, the 3000. The 3000 looked great and its specs were not anything shabby. With it's full 32 bit architecture, it had an advantage in speed in many ways. It had one disadvantage for a very long time for me. It was expensive! It cost nearly \$4000 at the time I paid \$1895 for the 2500. Of course there was a new 2500 that had just been introduced, using the 68030, which was the reason for the drop in price for the older 2500. After the introduction of the 4000, the 3000 began dropping in price very rapidly. Even the 3000T was beginning to look appealing. After the demise of Commodore, used 3000's became available at even better prices. This is how I came to acquire a 3000. Fellow club

member, Mark Stodola, acquired a couple of 3000's at a very reasonable price and I bought one of them. It is a 16MHz version, and one of the last ones made. It even included a rare high-density floppy drive. I wasn't worried about the 16MHz part since accelerators could speed that up, or at least most do. Next came the hard part, selling the 2500. The 2500 had been sitting here for over four and a half years, going through a few down times, doing most things I needed it to do nicely. It had become just what the name implied, a friend. I was going to sacrifice it for the money needed to bring the 3000 up to speed. Fortunately, I sold it to someone that can provide a good home and allow me to get a look at it once and a while. In fact, this newsletter has been created on it! So long 2500, hello 3000.

Getting the 3000 up to speed seemed like a slow process, and covered a full year, most of it waiting for something to arrive. At first I had to use the 3000 in its basic form, 16MHz 68030, 1 meg of fast ram, 1 meg of chip ram, and ECS graphics. This was a big drop from the 2500's performance level I was used to. Many things I was used to doing could not be accomplished now. Due to the 3000's enhanced architecture, I was impressed by how well the basic AmigaOS performed with the accelerated custom chips. Everything seemed to move along very well. Actually, this machine operates faster than the first 2500!

My first improvement came with the installation of more memory. I discovered that I had some 256x4 memory chips left over from some past computer work. This gave me 2 megs of chip and 1 meg of fast. A small improvement, but a usable one. After looking at what was available, I decided to get a CyberVision64 graphics card. This is a graphics accelerator card that features the S3 Trios64 graphics chip. It features a 64 bit data processing, 64 bit data paths, 4 megs of memory, a 64 bit blitter, and a chip to handle the planar to chunky conversion. It also includes the CyberGraphX software package, which does all the work to get Workbench using more colors up to and including

24bit. There was some talk of it being considered as a new standard, to be included in new Amigas coming. Sounded good to me, and the test results in the magazine showed it in good light. I placed an order with Softwood, the official distributor for phase5. (I wonder why they spell their name with a lower case letter?) I inquired about the availability of the Cyberstorm MkII, the 060 accelerator coming from phase5. I was told it would be another two weeks before it would be available. Little did I know this would be the first of many times that I would hear those words. Since phase5 recommended the Super Buster revision 11 to get optimum performance from the Cybervision64, I decided to order it as well as the other chips that had been updated by Commodore since the 3000's introduction.

"My machine, that had taken 48 seconds to boot up with the 3000 controller, now was taking just 25 seconds with the Warp."

The chips arrived in a few days, so I decided to install them rather than wait for the card. Good thing, as I was about to make a discovery that few knew existed. The new Super Buster does not work running at 16MHz! Although my machine booted up OK and ran just fine, the cards plugged into the expansion slots didn't show up! I thought the chip was bad. I tried two more and they didn't work either. I began to wonder if Super Buster revision 11 would run at 16MHz. Commodore had this problem when the 3000 was introduced. They had two versions of Super Buster, for each speed of the 3000. Finally I got confirmation of my suspicions from a couple of replies to a post I made on the Internet. This prompted me to look for an accelerator sooner than planned. The accelerators I had seen clocked the motherboard of the 16MHz 3000 up to 25MHz. After calling around and talking to many people, one thing was sure — the 68060 accelerators were behind schedule due to slow deliveries of the 68060 from Motorola. The only accelerator available for the 3000 was the Warp Engine from Macro Systems... well, sort of. Everywhere I called was out of it. Rumors of the coming 68060's had caused Macro System to drop it, or at least that's what I was being told. After calling every place I could find an ad for, I located just one. They were advertising a nice low price compared to others, but my inquiry showed they had raised the price due to demand. I decided to order it anyway. I am glad I did, or I would have had to use the machine as it was for a very long time.

The card arrived in two days. This unit is the 40MHz 68040 version of the card, very similar to the one made for the 4000, but with only two SIMM sockets angled over for clearance purposes. Nowhere in any advertisements or in

the manual would my next discovery be covered. The card would not fit my machine! I had to cut a hole in the floppy drive mounting plate for the fan and heat sink to stick up through. After much cutting I finally had it in. It even started up OK.

This was a serious performance upgrade for the 3000! I put twelve megs of memory on the card at first and later I would move it up to twenty-four megs... more memory than I ever had before. Only PageStream would ever use up that much memory, I found out. I was really excited by how fast my 3000 was. The Warp Engine was fast in itself, plus it clocked the motherboard up to 25MHz. That added another boost to the way the machine operated as well. Now if that Cybervision64 would just show up. It did, but it had taken fourteen weeks. I called Softwood several times about the card, and always got the same answer... another two weeks. It was worth the wait, as I finally had a machine that could bring back the magic of my previous machine. The Cybervision64 is so far the fastest Zorro III graphics card available. It easily beats the competition at most things, and is only a little faster at a few things. For the most part it's faster than the competition. Now my machine was fast and usable. I could really use it again. PageStream was a usable program again, although the latest version then used most of my memory during printing.

After using the Warp for a while I decided to hook my hard drives up to its Fast SCSI 2 controller. The 3000 has a very fast SCSI controller built right onto the motherboard. It was just as fast as or faster than any of the controllers I had for the 2500. The Warp's controller is faster yet. It measured out at twice the speed of the 3000 controller. One of my drives really responded to its improvement. A respectable 1.8 megs of data transfer on the 3000's built in controller jumped to 5.5 on the Warp's controller! My machine, that had taken 48 seconds to boot up with the 3000 controller, now was taking just 25 seconds with the Warp. Both of those times were with the 68040 running in optimum settings and the hard drive defragmented.

The 40MHz is the fastest speed the 68040 has been offered in by Motorola and that made it about two and a half times faster than the fastest 50MHz 68030 chip. Many operations in the chip have been optimized to execute in one clock cycle, versus two or more for the 68030. To further improve performance the math chip has been moved into the 68040. Looking at the 68030 on the 3000 motherboard and comparing it to the 68040 on the Warp gives a fair idea of the performance gain. The 68040 looks really big in comparison. One feature of the Warp that was appealing to me was the promise of a future upgrade to the 68060. To this day no word has come of when or if the upgrade will show. My own attempts to contact them, both by phone and fax, have failed to get an answer.

This new combination was very fast compared to anything I had used before. Many normal operations were taking place so quickly it's hard to believe that it's the same

machine running the same programs. Just as I was about to get used to the new improvement in performance, along comes the chance to get more. I had begun to wonder if the 68060 would ever show up in enough numbers to make it readily available. So far only a few had shown up around the world, and their owners were feeling privileged indeed. Then it was announced that Motorola had gotten their act together and the 68060 would be available in enough numbers to satisfy the demand. I called Softwood, and started a new round of "two weeks till it arrives" statements. This would be a recurring statement from May till September when the Cyberstorm MkII would arrive at my house.

With the Cyberstorm MkII, phase5 has outdone itself in producing a versatile accelerator card. Until its introduction, there were accelerators for 4000, and accelerators for 3000. These accelerators even had trouble with the tower versions of the respective models. The Cyberstorm MkII works in all four models! It also is amazing in that there is only one jumper on the card, and that is to allow writing to the onboard FlashROM when needed. The

FlashROM is something new to Amiga accelerators, allowing updates to the accelerator when needed, without removing the card although the jumper does mean some disassembly to get to it. It also offered the largest memory expansion for the 3000, a full 128 megs. The Warp for the 3000 could only go to 64 megs with its two SIMM slots although they did not recommend using 32 meg SIMMs in the manual. The real star of this accelerator is of course the 50MHz 68060. This chip gives the Amiga many of the latest CPU features currently showing up on other platforms. I will cover those a little later.

Along with Cyberstorm MkII, I ordered the CyberSCSI controller that adds Fast SCSI II to the accelerator. After experiencing the Warp's SCSI controller, I knew I would have to have that on the new accelerator. With the accelerator there is a sheet explaining that Zorro III DMA cards will not work with the 3000 without some modification to the 3000 motherboard. Seems that Commodore left out a line that sent timing signals between the accelerator and the Zorro III bus. The Warp had a simple wired clip that took care of this easily. With all of its

many advantages, I cannot see why phase5 would miss this simple procedure to fix the problem other than to save cost. Still, they provided the instructions to permanently fix the problem forever. How many people will want to solder their motherboard, or pay a professional to do it? I was all prepared to do it when I discovered another problem apparently no-one outside of phase5 knew of. The CyberSCSI device apparently was not designed with the

3000 in mind. When it is mounted on the accelerator, it would stick out from the side of the 3000 by about three inches. A call to Softwood showed that they were unaware of the problem. After several weeks of calling to get something straightened out, a fix in the future was promised. 'Til then I would have to make do with the slower 3000 controller. During the long wait for the accelerator to arrive, the price of memory had been dropping rapidly. I took advantage of the situation and stocked up. This would give me 56 megs of Fast RAM, 4 megs of Graphics RAM on the Cybervision64, and 2 megs on the Chip RAM.

Installation of the card would provide a full day of

fun and excitement. Moving the Warp to its new home took up most of the day. Trying to get the machine to boot up with it provided many trying moments. It finally worked after my getting serious with seating it into the accelerator slot. This allowed me to turn my attention to my machine. One of my fears turned out to be true. The Cyberstorm MkII does not provide a clock signal to the motherboard. While awaiting the arrival of the card I had worked out an alternate plan. I would reclock the motherboard by removing its crystal and replacing it with the appropriate one. I bought a socket to make future switches easy as well. The plan sounds simpler than the actual execution was. Getting the motherboard out of the chassis was a new experience, but at least it gave me a chance to see the hidden part of the motherboard. Removing the existing crystal proved to be a tough job. The solder resisted melting even with 140 watt soldering gun. After several hours of heating and pulling it was free and my main worry, damaging the motherboard, never happened. Installing the crystal socket failed completely. The socket fell apart under the heat of the soldering gun, the mother-

SPEED LIMIT
50
MHZ

board still shows no sign of heat damage. Oddly enough while looking over the motherboard I noticed that another crystal did have a socket for easy removal. Why one and not the other? Getting the other crystal in was nearly as hard as getting the original out. I ended up installing and removing the motherboard two more times. I thought I had damaged the motherboard on the final attempt to get it right, but it turned out to be one loose connection on the crystal. Finally the 68060 was up and running. With the installation of the Cyberstorm, Cybervision64, and CyberGraphX, could say that phase5 has really helped me create a Cyber3000!

The 68060 apparently will be the end of a long line of successful chips from Motorola. Motorola has decided to concentrate on the PowerPC, although one more version, a 66MHz, may be forthcoming. This 68060 has been given just about every feature new and or used in CPUs introduced in the last ten years. Currently there appears to be a competition between CISC and RISC based chip designs taking place. CISC being the traditional chip design, where all the CPU's commands are buried in the chip, thus the name CISC that stands for Complex Instruction Set Chip. The other design, RISC, that stands for Reduced Instruction Set Chip, has most of its instructions carried externally, and provided by the programmer. Its internal instructions are simpler and execute quicker. The 68060 is of the CISC group but has adopted several features of the RISC design. Here's how Motorola describes the 68060.

"The 68060 is a 32-bit processor with a superscalar, pipelined architecture. It has more than 2 million transistors, using a 0.5 micron, triple-layer metal, 3.3 volt process in a static design. Separated in the 060 are instruction caches and data caches; instruction fetch pipelines (with four-stage instruction processor, a physically-mapped 8Kbyte instruction cache with four-way self instruction buffer), and operand execution pipelines (with four-stage operand processor, a physically mapped 8Kbyte data cache with 4-way interleaving and a 4-entry, 32-bit write buffer). 68060 has the ability to execute more than one instruction per clock cycle due to two parallel instruction pipelines for integer instruction and also a third pipeline for floating point instructions. The chip also has the ability to do branch prediction to increase the speed even more."

What does all of this mean? FAST!!! That's what it means. The original 68000 used in the 1000, 2000, and 500 had a rating of about .35 MIPS. The 40MHz 68040 was given a rating of about 25 MIPS. The 50MHz 68060 gets a 82 MIPS rating. This goes with Motorola's original plan of exceeding the 25MHz 68040's performance by about 2.5 to 3.5 times. Tests I have run have shown that many times, it is only delivering about 75% of its full potential. This has to do with the way the programs were originally written. A few 68060 optimized programs have shown up, but time will tell if more will show up. Programs optimized for the 68040 run very well, and a few really fly!

Although Motorola has moved the PowerPC up to confront the Intel chips, the 68060 still shows favorably against them. One area the 68000's beats the Intel chips in were in the number of registers. In a comparison between the 68060 and the Pentium we see that it is still true. The Pentium has 8 32bit integer registers and 8 64bit floating point registers. The 68060 has 16 32bit integer registers and 16 64bit floating point registers. Several comparisons between the Amiga running the 68060 and some Pentium based PCs showed the 68060 compared favorably to or beat the Pentiums running from 90 to 120MHz. Motorola has said that they intend to make 66 and 80MHz versions, but only the 66 is mentioned on their website.

"PageStream now operates so smoothly that it is like a totally new package. I can rotate objects very smoothly."

The Cyberstorm MkII combined with the Cybervision64 gives the Amiga an awesome leap in performance in many areas, but a few tests showed only a modest performance increase. This appears to be tied to the FPU instructions that need to be emulated for the 68060. The Cyberstorm MkII comes with a program called CyberPatcher that watches for those offending instructions and makes the proper changes to make them work better. This gives the Cyberstorm a great advantage over the competition. Unfortunately, many tests turn off multitasking, killing the programs' advantage. This will show up the 68060 in a less than favorable light in those tests. AIBB, one of the best known benchmark programs, really cuts the 68060 short. To even get it to run I have to convince it I am running a 50MHz 68010 with no Math Chip! Even with that handicap it still wins the test. A few just barely beat the competition, and they were using Floating Point operations. In a test of graphical performance, the Cyberstorm/Cybervision64 combo beat out a 4000 by nearly 30 times!

Two things really improved for me that really made the combination a winner. PageStream now operates so smoothly that it is like a totally new package. I can rotate objects very smoothly. Page redraws happen very quickly, enhancing productivity in every way. I even created a small test to show how much faster it is. I created a large title with TrueType fonts and then used TextFX to alter the looks of the text. The 40MHz 68040 took 18.13 seconds to make the change. The 50MHz 68060 took 11.67 seconds to accomplish the same task. That sure did not seem like a great improvement but, still it was better. Then phase5 brought out their first software update package. Everything seemed faster with the new software. I ran the PageStream

BOD Report

The January Meeting Results by Bill Raecke

test again. I could not believe the results, it only took 1.39 seconds! Now that's a speed-up worth the price. The other thing I enjoy doing that benefits from a faster accelerator card is the Internet. The Internet requires lots of image decoding and the 68060 does that very quickly — especially compressed images like GIF and JPEG images that are the format of choice there. The Internet looks better with 256 colors, and it really benefits from the Cybervision64 graphics capabilities. I am also allowed to use higher resolutions to show more of the pages as well. I prefer 800x600, as that seems to offer the best compromise. Calling up pages from the cache created by the browser are recalled instantly most of the time. One page I use frequently took about 15 seconds for the 40MHz 68040 to recall and that was when the page was 212K in size. Now it is 256K in size and takes but 8 seconds to do the same. While on the subject of graphics, the combination of Cyberstorm, Cybervision64, and CyberGraphX make all forms of graphics better. Images, MPEGs, Quicktime videos, AVIs, and everything else work so much better. The only thing I am currently waiting for is the ability to view MPEGs with audio, a promised feature of the next MPEG viewer release. Quicktime and AVIs currently do play at full speed with audio. The Quicktime videos are definitely the better format from what I have seen.

As far as I am concerned this combination of boards is definitely worth considering for all 3000(T)/4000(T) owners. The only problem as I type this, the Cybervision64 is no more. A new board has just hit the market from phase5. Cybervision64/3D featuring, as the name says, 3D graphics. This card offers the ability to fit Zorro II machines as well as Zorro III. A new CyberGraphX package has been announced to take advantage of its new abilities. As well, phase5 has announced a new accelerator package they call the PowerUP. It features a PowerPC chip in conjunction with a 68040 or 68060 to run Amiga applications. This offers compatibility with existing software as well as the ability to take advantage of software written for the PowerPC. They say that PowerPC programs could run 10 to 20 times the speed of current software! That is a serious speed-up, and nearly a dozen companies are promising software for the new accelerator. Both of these cards pale in comparison to an announcement of a new computer from phase5, called the A\Box. It features a whole new architecture design to carry the Amiga into the next century. If they pull this off, the whole Amiga community owes them a big THANKS. I wish them luck on the project, and hope to see it soon. Although they have been late in delivering in the past, and a few announced items have never shown, they were only small items. They have delivered some very impressive products so far. The A\Box is one big project that hopefully will deliver as advertised. If it does, we've got a winner. As for my machine, maybe it's time to take a look at one of those 16 bit sound cards. AGM

Contrary to the majority of Board of Director's Meetings, the January meeting resulted in several decisions which affect the club. Here is a synopsis of what happened.

Our bulk mailing permit expired and a discussion ensued as to whether it was time to drop it and go with first class postage from this point forward. The permit itself costs \$80 annually and requires us to mail 200 copies of the newsletter even though we really need to mail only about 100 copies to members and other clubs. After a lengthy discussion, the decision was made to drop the permit and mail our newsletters first class hereafter... or until our membership increases.

The next subject was our BBS phone lines. Our decreasing membership has left us with a BBS that is not nearly as active as it once was, and a corresponding decrease in income leaves us with less cash to pay for our two metro phone lines. Those metro lines cost about \$40 per month each. The BOD discussed the options of a) dropping one phone line entirely, b) converting one line to a local line, or c) leaving things as they are for now. After a lengthy discussion, the board decided to change one line to a local line for a savings of about \$30 per month. This should have minimal impact on the membership since most callers are local anyway... and we will still have one metro line for those who aren't.

The final major decision for the month involved our C64/128 Chapter. The chapter has expressed the opinion that they no longer get much benefit from membership in the MCCC. After much discussion the board decided that this was probably true. The decision was made to offer their organization payment of the balance of MCCC dues for members wishing to leave the MCCC.

Having finished with major decisions, the Board decided to begin preparation of an official Web Site. I have that assignment. I will begin working on it as soon as I get this newsletter redesign behind me. AGM



FTW Farewell

The C64/128 Chapter Splits Off
by Mary Louise Hagemeyer

Once upon a time, a marvelous new computer was introduced. Eager buyers snapped it up, took it home, and stared at it. What could it do? Because it was so new, there was very little software for it, and advice about using it was hard to find. So these new owners did the only reasonable thing — they got together and formed the MCCC. That was back in February, 1983, when about 90 Commodore 64 and VIC 20 users met in the Hurst Library to start a club that would quickly grow to nearly 600 members.

Of the founding fathers, Bruce Nelson and Garry Wordleman remain active in the club. [Editor's Note: Actually, only Garry Wordelman remains active at this time.] Those of us who attended the first meetings remember the intense interest in the question-and-answer sessions and the excitement of watching a new game and taking a copy home. A year later, the meetings were so crowded that we couldn't hear the question or answer, so we divided into chapters of more reasonable size. At the height of C64 interest, there were five chapters: Arlington, Fort Worth, Fort Worth Night, Grand Prairie, and H-E-B.

1985 was a really big year. First the club BBS went online, then the C128 appeared, followed by the Amiga. Soon an Amiga chapter was formed, and then several more, while the other chapters gradually shrank and merged. By the time Commodore International went under in 1994, the MCCC had three Amiga chapters but only one 8-bit survivor, the Fort Worth group.

Although some sturdy die-hards in the Fort Worth Chapter continue to meet, we realize that we and the Amiga chapters have little to offer each other. Therefore, we have agreed that it is time to part. The Fort Worth group will continue to meet informally at the UNT Health Sciences Bldg. on Camp Bowie at Montgomery, the second Saturday of the month, at 1:30. For more information, contact Mike and Brenda Sessums at 817-238-9891 or e-mail, msessums@fastlane.net.

We've met many good people in the MCCC and have fond memories of good fellowship and shared experiences. Best wishes and HAPPY COMPUTING. [AGM]

The Newsletter

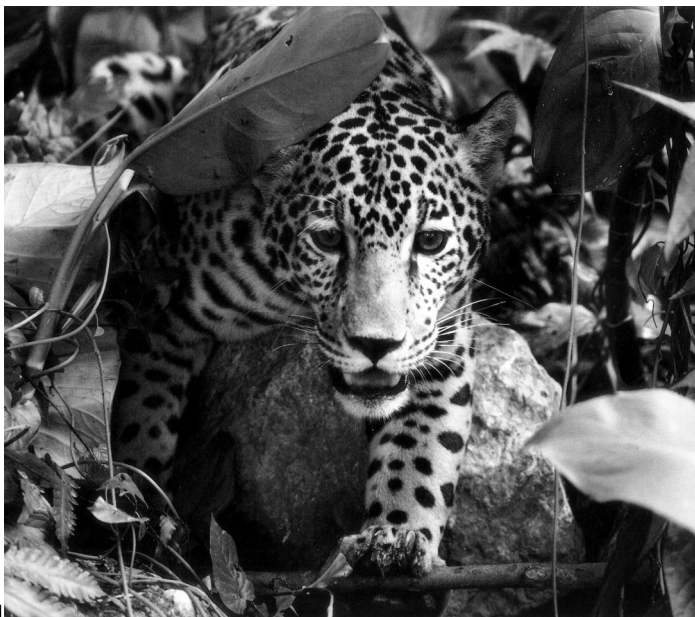
Notice anything new?
by Bill Raecke

I've been busy this month. You've probably noticed by now that the newsletter sports a new name and an updated look. There are plenty of changes behind the scenes as well that have kept me (are still keeping me) busy. First and foremost, the new newsletter is being produced with PageStream 3.2. This new PageStream is a wonderful product that has a lot of nifty new features that I promise to write about as soon as I get familiar enough with it that I can do that effectively. My overall impression is that this version is slanted much more toward the professional user. I think it will improve my output a great deal once I get used to it. In the meantime, it's so new that I find I'm having to relearn a lot of things I thought I knew.

One thing that I didn't like about the new PageStream, however, was the output. Most users probably don't have a Postscript printer, and for those of us who don't, some of the options we used to enjoy for controlling halftone output went away with the upgrade. Following Johnny Kitchens' advice, I purchased Studio II, a print control program. Studio II has drivers for just about every printer available. It combines seamlessly with both the Workbench (via a standard print driver) and with PageStream 3.2 (via a PageStream style driver). The result far surpasses anything I was able to achieve with PageStream 2.2. Studio II is another product I will write a review on as soon as I become more familiar with it. In the meantime, I'm getting these results without even having read the manual.

The last remaining behind-the-scenes change is my purchase of a new printer. I'm now using a Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 693C. It does a beautiful 600dpi black and white output that's perfect for the newsletter while providing me with beautiful color output when I want it (although the beautiful color requires the aforementioned Studio II print driver).

So, this is the first MCCC newsletter produced with PageStream 3.2, Studio II, and an HP DeskJet 693C. Dig out your December '95 issue and compare the picture of the jaguar there with the one on this page. I think you'll notice a very big difference. [AGM]



A Skier's Dictionary

Something to get you started in a popular winter sport

Author Unknown

ALP — One of a number of places to ski in Europe. Also a shouted request for assistance made by a European skier. An appropriate reply: "What's Zermatter?"

AVALANCHE — One of the few actual perils skiers face that needlessly frighten timid individuals away from the sport. See also: **BLIZZARD**, **CONTUSION**, **FRACTURE**, **FROSTBITE**, **HYPOTHERMIA**, **LIFT COLLAPSE**.

BINDINGS — Automatic mechanisms that protect skiers from potentially serious injury during a fall by releasing skis from boots, sending the skis skittering across the slope where they trip over two other skiers, and so on and on, eventually causing the entire slope to be protected from serious injury.

BONES — Brittle things of which there are 206 in the human body. No need for dismay however: There are two bones in the middle ear that have never been broken in a ski accident.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING — Traditional Scandinavian all-terrain snow-traveling technique. It's good exercise. It doesn't require the purchase of costly lift tickets. It has no crowds or lineups. It isn't skiing. See **CROSS-COUNTRY SOMETHING-OR-OTHER**.

CROSS-COUNTRY SOMETHING-OR-OTHER — Touring on skis along trails in scenic wilderness, gliding through snow-hushed woods far from the hubbub of the ski slopes, hearing nothing but the whispery hiss of the skis slipping through the snow and the muffled tinkle of car keys dropping into the puffy powder of a deep, wind-sculpted drift.

EXERCISES — A few simple warm-ups to make sure you've been protected for the slopes: 1. Tie a cinder block to each foot with old belts, and climb a flight of stairs. 2. Sit on the outside of a second-story window ledge with your skis on and your poles in your lap for 30 minutes. 3. Bind your legs together at the ankles, lie flat on the floor; then, holding a banana in each hand, get to your feet.

GLOVES — Hand coverings designed to be tight enough around the wrist to restrict circulation, but not so close-fitting as to allow any manual dexterity. They should admit moisture from the outside without permitting any dampness within to escape.

GRAVITY — One of 5 fundamental forces in nature affecting skiers. The other four are the strong force which makes bindings jam; the weak force which makes ankles give way on turns; electromagnetism, which produces dead batteries in expensive ski-resort parking lots; and the last one; that when an irresistible force meets an immovable object, an unethical lawyer will immediately appear.



PREJUMP — Manoeuvre in which an expert skier makes a controlled jump just ahead of a bump. Beginners may execute a controlled pre-fall just before losing their balance and, if they wish, can precede it with a prescream and a few pregroans and preobcenities.

SHIN — That bruised area on the front of the leg running from the point where the ache from the wretched knee ends to that where the searing pain from the strained ankle begins.

SKI! — A shout made to alert people that a loose ski is coming down the hill. Another warning skiers should be familiar with is "Avalanche!" which tells everyone that a hill is coming down the hill.

SKIER — One who pays an arm and a leg for the chance to break them.

SKIS — A pair of long, thin, flexible runners that permit a skier to slide across the snow and into debt.

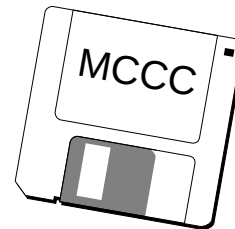
THOR — Thandinavian god of acheth and painth.

TRAVERSE — To ski across a slope at an angle; one of two quick and simple methods of reducing speed.

TREE — The other method. AGM

Library News

The Best of The BBS — On Disk
by Bill Raecke



MCCC-A_1214

EGSApps: Distributed in archived format, this file contains PhotoAlbum and EGSTV. The version of PhotoAlbum here is for EGS Amiga systems as opposed to the standard version which works on AGA and CyberGraphX systems. If you are unfamiliar with PhotoAlbum, you owe it to yourself to check it out. It shows a directory of pictures as thumbnails. You can then click on a thumbnail to display it full size. You can also use it to maintain databases of the images in your system for even quicker access. The EGSTV is an EGS version of CyberTV, an animation player.

LabelMerge: LabelMerge is an AReXX script for PageStream 3.x that allows you to build labels using a template and an external file of names and addresses. Simple enough to explain, but very handy to use.

QT: A QuickTime animation player. System requirements are a 68020 or better processor, AmigaOS 3.x, and either AGA or CyberGraphX. If you don't have this basic setup, time to upgrade.

MCCC-A_1215

ChaosPro: ChaosPro is the most powerful fractal exploration program I have encountered. It supports the Mandelbrot and Julia sets, of course; but it also supports Lyapunov Space, Plasma, and lots of other mathematical set. To make things more interesting, the program operates in any screen mode up to 256 colors. If that isn't enough, you can generate your final versions in full 24-bit splendor. If you haven't seen a Mandelbrot displayed in 24-bit color, you don't know what you're missing.

CyberShow: The premier picture viewing utility for CyberGraphX and AGA systems. It shows pictures in about any resolution your system can handle and it handles about 20 picture file types internally. Beyond that, it will handle whatever you have a datatype for. But it's not just a picture viewer – it will also serve as a very nice slideshow program, complete with fancy screen wipes – and it will save pictures in many formats as well, which makes it a nice, simple picture format conversion program as well. The version on the disk (8.2) will be your update if you have the registered version. If you haven't registered yet, you can still use this demo, but pictures will only be displayed in grey scale.

MCCC-A_1216

MCC_MonthNavigator: MCC stands for MUI Custom Class. This MUI add-on adds calendar functions to the MUI GUI class library. As with everything in the MUI GUI, this does nothing unless you have a program that uses the class... but you really should keep your system current and ready for that next MUI application that's probably just around the corner. In the meantime, a nice calendar demo program is included.

Poing4: Remember the old original breakout game? This is



another of the many games based on that old standard. In this one, the "ball" moves side to side. One thing that sets this one apart is that it's possible to break through the "wall" on the right to another screen, even before the current screen has been cleared. I don't need to go into long explanations here do I? Just get it and try it. You'll like it.

Tracker-Music: I'm picky when it comes to MOD music. Most of it is closer to noise than music... so it's unusual that I find something good enough to include on an MCCC disk. Heck, most of the music I download never even makes it to the BBS (there's no sense wasting everyone's time in addition to my own). Ballada is a nice quiet tune... an interesting melody with a quiet guitar and flute arrangement. Kind of a Celtic sound to it. Highly recommended.

MCCC-A_1217

AmigaT: AmigaT is a program intended to be used in scripts. It will return information about the CPU being used, whether a floating-point processor is available, etc. And it returns the information in such a way that a script can interpret the results and make decisions based on the outcome. If you have a system that can be booted with multiple configurations, you could probably use this program.

GIF-Pictures: This is a nice one... an aerial picture of a portion of New York City. I'm not familiar enough with the city to know where this is, but a couple of bridges are in the shot. It's a nice, high-quality picture.

MPegVideo_datatype: Just what it says. It's an MPEG datatype. Install it and you'll be able to view MPEG animations with MultiView. [AGM](#)

Tech Support

A True Story

From a Novell NetWire SysOp

Caller: "Hello, is this Tech Support?"

Tech: "Yes, it is. How may I help you?"

Caller: "The cup holder on my PC is broken and I am within my warranty period. How do I go about getting that fixed?"

Tech: "I'm sorry, but did you say a cup holder?"

Caller: "Yes. It's attached to the front of my computer."

Tech: "Please excuse me if I seem a bit stumped, because I am. Did you receive this as part of a promotional, at a trade show? How did you get this cup holder? Does it have any trademark on it?"

Caller: "It came with my computer. I don't know anything about a promotional. It just has '4x' on it."

At this point the Tech Rep had to mute the caller, because he couldn't stand it. The caller had been using the load drawer of the CD-ROM drive as a cup holder, and snapped it off the drive! [AGM](#)

Thought For The Month

Who says I'm paranoid...
And why do they want to
know?

Afterthought

There are some micro-organisms
that exhibit characteristics of both
plants and animals. When exposed
to light they undergo
photosynthesis; and when the
lights go out, they turn into animals.
But then again, don't we all?

Meeting Notes



Amiga Central Meeting Johnny C. Kitchens

December brings many things with it every year. The happiness of Christmas, as well as sadness brought to us by certain news stories and events. A new variation to our unpredictable weather... as in cold. We get to have hope in the new year as in approaches, and we get to see how our reelected President gets to do things for the next four years. For our club we get to have a slightly different type of meeting, as a party! There is not a great deal to say about the meeting other than it was fun for some, entertaining for others, filling for some, and the North Dallas chapter got their officers elected. Thanks to all the people who brought food and hardware to keep us all entertained. I hope we can do it again next year!

January 1997 brings a new year for the club — and what a start we have had! It began with one of the most productive and exciting officer meetings I have ever attended. We accomplished more in that one meeting than in years worth of previous meetings. Many of the things covered in that meeting have already begun to show up in the club operations. One of those things was the first to show up at our meeting. The C-64 Chapter is no longer a part of our club. Also, our club will be dropping one of our metro phone lines, and replacing it with a conventional line number. Our newsletter publisher announced that the newsletter would be getting a new look. The club is in the process of seeking a new name. If you have any suggestions, send them to us. We need a name that better represents the Amiga and our users. Our library had a few changes as well. Our disks now feature FFS format for improved disk performance. The other involves what is available on the disks. Only the best will be available on disks, which is a

very good idea.

After much discussion about these changes we moved on to some general discussions. A member was having problems with MagicWorkbench. After a lengthy discussion it sounded as if we needed to do a hands on examination of his system to figure out his problem.

Then the main part of the meeting got underway. Our club librarian, Ned Kelly, was having problems with his CD-ROM drive and decided that a club meeting would be a good place to figure out the problem. Several proposals for other experiments or demos using the machine were suggested as well, my favorite being the static electricity discharge example. We pressed on, only to discover our first problem: Someone forgot to bring a CD caddy for the drive. We went to an alternate plan, using a different drive. This allowed us to test the controller to see if it was working properly. In short we did not get it to work. We also managed to get one hard drive to stop working, hopefully temporarily. We also uncovered a few things that need adjustment, such as CPU CACHES that needed to be turned on! The real fun of this meeting was that so many were involved and we seemed to be enjoying ourselves. This is the type of meeting we need a few more of every year. Now if we can just find more people to volunteer their machines to our scrutiny. Hey, maybe the guy with the Magic Workbench problem can be persuaded to bring his machine!



The MCCC

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Amiga (formally Commodore) computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with ESCOM or Amiga Technologies. Commodore and Amiga product names (Commodore, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of ESCOM.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$24 per year or \$15 for six months and entitle the member to a mailed copy of the newsletter and free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

AGM Journal

Copyright Information: Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other groups or individuals who may find them helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising: The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (prepaid consecutive three months): Full Page — \$36 (\$96); Half Page — \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page — \$12 (\$32); Business Card — \$6 (\$16).

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles may be submitted in virtually any Amiga-generated format. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS or sent via e-mail to wraecke@arlington.net, or submitted on disk.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is 7am of the fourth Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail c/o Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News are available at \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded with the required fee by the newsletter deadline.

MCCC Officers

President.....	Ned Kelly.....	817-277-5825
Vice President.....	Mark Stodola.....	972-299-6824
Treasurer.....	John Malmstrom....	817-282-6158
Secretary.....	Okley Moss.....	817-282-7751
Librarian.....	Ned Kelly.....	817-277-5825
Education Chair....	David Owens.....	817-577-2304
BBS Coordinator...	Okley Moss.....	817-282-7751
Newsletter Editor..	Bill Raecke.....	817-465-2014

Chapter Officers

Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter

President.....	David Owens.....	817-577-2304
Vice President.....	Wayne Brodnax.....	817-244-0828
Treasurer.....	John Malmstrom.....	817-282-6158
Secretary.....	Johnny Kitchens.....	817-649-8632
Librarian.....	Ned Kelly.....	817-277-5825

Amiga North Dallas Chapter

President.....	Gus Reiter.....	972-713-7348
Vice President.....	Steve Nichols.....	972-530-6345
Treasurer.....	Eddie Corr.....	972-423-1947
Secretary.....	Michael Turner.....	972-216-9138
Librarian.....	John Cummings.....	972-618-5308

BBS Numbers

Metro.....	28,800 BAUD.....	817-268-4191
Local.....	28,800 BAUD.....	817-280-9900

Calendar Of Events

*Feb 4 MCCC Board of Directors Meeting
7:30 pm
Okley Moss' place
1049 Keith Drive, Hurst*

*Feb 11 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30pm
Bell Helicopter Training Facility
Hwy 10 at Precinct Line, Hurst*

*Feb 18 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30pm
Richardson Square Mall
Beltline at Plano Road, Richardson*

Feb 22 March Newsletter Deadline

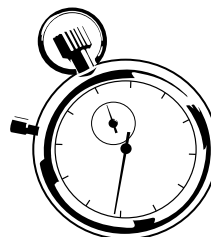
*Mar 4 MCCC Board of Directors Meeting
7:30pm
Bill Raecke's place
2614 Charolais Way, Arlington*

Membership Watch

Memberships Expired in January

*Don Garver
Thomas Seaver
Jack Slay
Sean Wilson
Bernie Wilson*

*John Patterson
Jack Shanks
Troy Starr
Garry Wordelman*



Memberships Expiring in February

*Mike and Shirley Bond
Barbara Cramer
Ken Doll
Ben McCall
Fred McNabb
Kenny Teoh*

*Philip Chatman
Thomas Critchfield
Douglas Gaudin
Foster McCowan
Chip Schaefer*

The AGM Journal

MCCC

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Address Correction Requested

Note Membership Expiration on Label